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This I Believe

AP Literature and Composition

Fate is Fake

At every wedding I have been to—altogether too many—I have found myself rolling my eyes, consequently soliciting a quick elbow to my side from my mother every time the bride gushes, “We were just meant to be.” Meant to be? Says who? The same disdain goes to those trying to console a hysterically sobbing, newly single friend saying, “Everything happens for a reason.” When I hear this, I cannot help but to subconsciously check that person off in my mind as an idiot. I could never wrap my brain around the concept of fate. This is not a personal belief, it is, in fact, the opposite; it’s something I *don’t* believe in. In order for me to compose a personal credo, I ruminated on my disbelief of fate and destiny. Through a process of personal reflection and deep contemplation, I came up with this: I believe that we *choose* our own fate.

I was not always insistent on this belief; in fact, I barely entertained the notion of choosing my own destiny until I was a senior in high school. While at a medical-themed summer camp, I was told, by my own counselor no less, that I would never be a doctor, at least not a good one. After a bout of anger and resentment toward the man, it dawned on me—no one is in charge of my own future but me. After all, if Oprah Winfrey can rise from her impoverished roots to become one of the most powerful women alive, surely I can be a doctor, an author, an artist, or anything I want to be. Before I start sounding like a fortune cookie, I should note that this belief is governed by a set of rules. For one, every goal has to be realistic. If you have no acting ability, do not expect to be Broadway’s new rising star. Likewise, one should expect to exert a great deal of effort into his ambition. Failure is almost imminent, it should be expected, but it never warrants giving up. After all, when your future is at stake, don’t hold back.

I can’t help but have a smile of self-satisfaction on my face when I contemplate the notion of the world adopting my philosophies as their own, and taking their fate in their own hands. Although I know this will never be the case, the only thing I can do is see my belief played out for myself. To my camp counselor, I accept your words as a challenge, and even if I do not end up a doctor, it will be because I chose not too. I will, however, be happy, for that is my goal in life, a rather reasonable one for which I will exert my full effort. I do believe that I have the ability to choose my fate, and I believe that this will lead me to an exceptional life.